

HIGH BRIDGE TRAIL STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
JULY 27, 2006
MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 PM. Committee members in attendance were: Ms. Aungier, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Calkins, Ms. Carney, Mr. Craft, Ms. Dixon, Mr. Doswell, Mr. Floyd, Ms. Goin, Sheriff Harris, Mr. Horton, Ms. Kahl, Mr. McKissick, Mr. Mitchell, Ms. Morris, Ms. Nase, Ms. Puckett, and Mr. Wilcox. DCR staff in attendance were: Mr. Schuppin, Mr. Zawatsky, Mr. Wallace, Mr. Joyner, Ms. Wampler, and Mr. Munson.

The committee reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting and made several corrections. Under question I, South Side Railroad was corrected. Also, the spelling of cavalry was corrected. Under question 3, the spelling of Wilcks Lake was corrected. In question 14, the order of priority for development of the park was corrected. It should have read:

“Phase I: Begin in Farmville and develop to Rice.

Phase II: Farmville to Prospect.

Phase III: ~~Prospect to Pamplin~~ Prospect to Pamplin or Rice to Burkeville, determined by status of connector corridor.

Phase IV: Remaining segment.”

It was further recommended that the Times Virginian in Appomattox be added to the list of newspapers that should receive copies of the newsletter. The minutes of the June 29th meeting were approved with the above listed corrections and additions.

The next item on the agenda was to develop a park purpose statement. Mr. Calkins and Ms. Wampler had each submitted draft versions and New River Trail State Park’s mission statement was also reviewed. Using the three models, the committee then developed the following mission statement for the park, which they chose to name the **High Bridge Trail State Park**, because it was agreed that including the word “trail” in the name would help market it as a linear park, not just a bridge or a battlefield.

“The purpose of High Bridge Trail State Park is to provide a premiere non-motorized, shared-use path for pedestrians, bicyclists, and horseback riders in the Heart of Virginia; to preserve and protect the historic, natural, and recreational resources along the trail; and to interpret the trail corridor to offer an understanding of the region’s historic events and their causes, impact, and legacy to individuals, the community, and the nation in the full context of American history.”

The committee then developed goals and objectives for the park as follows:

HIGH BRIDGE TRAIL STATE PARK GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Constitution of Virginia, Article XI-Section 1

“To the end that the people have clean air, pure water, and the use and enjoyment for recreation of adequate public lands, waters, and other natural resources, it shall be the policy of the Commonwealth to conserve, develop, and utilize its natural resources, its public lands, and historic sites and buildings. Further, it shall be the Commonwealth’s policy to protect its atmosphere, lands, and waters from pollution, impairment, or destruction, for the benefit, enjoyment, and general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth.”

B. Department of Conservation and Recreation Mission Statement

“The mission of the Department of Conservation and Recreation is to conserve, protect, and enhance the Commonwealth’s unique natural, recreational, scenic, historic and cultural resources”. Within this broad mission, the Department manages a system of strategically located properties totaling approximately 80,000 acres.

C. Virginia State Park Mission Statement

To conserve the natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources of the Commonwealth and provide recreational and educational opportunities consistent with the good stewardship of these lands, waters and facilities that leaves them unimpaired for future generations.

D. High Bridge Trail Purpose Statement

The purpose of High Bridge Trail State Park is to provide a premiere non-motorized, shared-use path for pedestrians, bicyclists, and horseback riders in the Heart of Virginia; to preserve and protect the historic, natural, and recreational resources along the trail; and to interpret the trail corridor to offer an understanding of the region’s historic events and their causes, impact, and legacy to individuals, the community, and the nation in the full context of American history.

Goal 1.0 – Protect and conserve the natural, scenic, historic, and cultural resources of the Park.

Objective 1.1 – Manage the park for the benefit of native species and natural communities and to provide a diversity of wildlife habitats.

Objective 1.2 – Implement the adopted Park Resource Management Plan.

Objective 1.3 – Protect the natural and pastoral setting of the park through an array of land conservation strategies in cooperation with local governments, conservation organizations, and local landowners.

Objective 1.4 – Stabilize and where possible restore the historic structures in the park.

Objective 1.5 – Design, construct and locate new facilities to compliment the natural or historic setting of the park.

Objective 1.6 – Identify, document, preserve, and interpret archeological resources in the park.

Objective 1.7 – Encourage the protection of resources adjacent to the corridor.

Objective 1.8 – Acquire additional properties where needed to enhance park management and operations.

Goal 2.0 – Provide recreational opportunities for day-use visitors to the park.

Objective 2.1 –Convert the rail bed to a multi-purpose, non-motorized trail.

Objective 2.2 –Provide trailheads for interpretation, access and use areas.

Objective 2.3 –Provide a range of high quality concession services in the park that facilitate use of the park’s many opportunities by all visitors.

Objective 2.4 – Encourage the establishment of private businesses in the vicinity of the park that offer a wide range of quality services to enhance the experience of visitors to the Park and the region.

Objective 2.5 –Enhance the connection of the High Bridge Trail with other trails in the heart of Virginia.

Objective 2.6 –Work with local governments to provide links to local communities and other attractions in the region.

Objective 2.7 –Cooperate with the towns of Burkeville and Pamplin City to extend High Bridge Trail to the train depots in each town.

Objective 2.8 – Cooperate with local governments and the National Park Service to integrate the park into the Route of Lee’s Retreat interpretive trail.

Objective 2.9 – Participate in the development and management of the Appomattox River Canoe Trail in Virginia.

Objective 2.10 –Provide opportunities for picnicking to include shelters, restroom facilities, roads, and parking at appropriate locations along the trail.

Objective 2.11 –Develop a series of rest stops and comfort stations at appropriate intervals along the trail.

Objective 2.12- Connect Lancer Village to High Bridge Trail.

Objective 2.13- Provide controlled vehicular access to the High Bridge Battlefield.

Goal 3.0 – Provide overnight facilities for visitors to the park.

Objective 3.1 – Offer a range of camping opportunities (including equestrian camping) at appropriate locations along the corridor.

Objective 3.2 – Encourage private providers to develop overnight accommodations (including equestrian camping) at locations accessible from the trail.

Goal 4.0 – To provide the focal point for interpretation, environmental education, and public information dissemination relating to conservation of significant scenic, natural, historic, cultural, archaeological, and geological resources of the High Bridge Trail corridor and the Heart of Virginia region.

Objective 4.1 – Develop a park interpretive plan that will dovetail with the story of Lee’s Retreat.

Objective 4.2 – Stabilize and maintain High Bridge and the remaining brick piers and interpret the Civil War battle.

Objective 4.3 – Restore Prospect depot and partner with Prospect Historical Society to develop appropriate interpretive displays.

Objective 4.4 – Provide a full-time park interpreter to guide interpretive and education programs in the Park and at the High Bridge Battlefield.

Objective 4.5 – Develop displays, brochures and interpretive programs that tell the story of the High Bridge corridor—featuring both natural resources (geology, flora, fauna) and historic resources (Native American, settlement, Civil War, Civil Rights, and transportation).

Objective 4.6 - Provide self-guided interpretive programs.

Objective 4.7 – Develop an interpretive center at the High Bridge Battlefield area.

Objective 4.8 – Acquire needed properties suitable for park educational, interpretive, and management programs when made available by willing sellers.

Goal 5.0 – Participate in mutually beneficial efforts with local governments, local businesses, and partner organizations to enhance the entire region.

Objective 5.1 – Work cooperatively with local jurisdictions, conservation organizations, historical groups, educational institutions, land trusts, and landowners along the High Bridge Trail corridor to ensure conservation of the scenic, natural and cultural resources of the region.

Objective 5.2 – Actively partner with local tourism agencies, chambers of commerce, Longwood University, Virginia’s Retreat, Carver-Price school, and other providers of outdoor recreation/education activities in the High Bridge Trail region to promote the area, and to provide information to the visiting public.

Objective 5.3 – Partner with private businesses and public agencies to ensure that recreational and hospitality offerings and educational opportunities provided to park visitors meet the highest standards.

Objective 5.4 – Foster community support and volunteerism in the park.

Objective 5.5 – Participate in local and regional planning efforts to foster sustainable land use and development that protects the natural features and scenic beauty of the High Bridge Trail corridor and the region.

Goal 6.0 – Administer and manage the park in a manner that fosters the public’s trust.

Objective 6.1 – Secure the High Bridge Trail State Park corridor with gates, signs, and security patrols while under development. Open the park to the public as each segment is developed, adequately staffed and equipped.

Objective 6.2 – Provide adequate vehicles and equipment to support management, operations and maintenance of the park.

Objective 6.3 – Provide appropriate staffing with the necessary skills and certifications to achieve the park’s goals and objectives.

Objective 6.4 – Provide services and facilities that meet adjacent landowner and public expectations for security, safety and health.

Objective 6.5 – Assure proper care and maintenance of park facilities and infrastructure.

Objective 6.6 – Provide staff residences at appropriate locations within a short distance from the trail corridor.

Objective 6.7 – Provide park administrative offices and maintenance facilities at management nodes.

Objective 6.8 – Conduct periodic engineering analyses of all trail bridges and structures to ensure their safe condition for public use.

Objective 6.9 – Provide safe drinking water systems for all major park public use areas.

Objective 6.10 – Provide sanitary facilities at reasonable intervals along the Trail and at the High Bridge.

Objective 6.11 – Deck and secure High Bridge.

During the discussion of the goals and objectives, it was agreed that the phased development plan for the park, as set forth in the revised minutes of the June 29th meeting and listed above, should be amended. The committee agreed that controlled vehicular access would need to be provided for the public to visit High Bridge Battlefield. It was felt that providing this controlled access was the highest priority for the park and that by providing this access in Phase I, it would attract attention and build support for funding the remainder of the park's development. The committee agreed that development of this access road, the decking of High Bridge, interpretive facilities, and the establishment of some form of public transport, would be the first priority for development. The next phases would follow in the order agreed to during the June 29th meeting.

The committee was reminded that the Public Input meeting would be held in the 3rd Floor Board Room of the Prince Edward County Courthouse at 7:00 PM on August 17, 2006. The next committee meeting will be held on August 24th at 1:00 PM in the VDOT Training Center in Farmville.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

